

SUBMISSION

DATE: 28 November 2019

FROM: Friends of Lorne
PO Box 68, Lorne VIC 3232
www.friendsoflorne.org.au

TO: Surf Coast Shire Council

RE: Planning number 18/0508 – Amended plans for Pt Grey, Lorne.

Background

Friends of Lorne ("FoL"), founded in 1966 as *The Lorne Planning and Preservation League*, is a community organisation of 120 members. Our organisation led the creation of the signature components of the *Lorne Structure Plan* and the *Neighbourhood Character Overlay*, both aimed at preserving the unique and much loved look of Lorne's forest-to-the-sea landscape.

The demolition of the current fish co-op building and restaurant

We strongly object to this proposal.

So much of Lorne's heritage architecture has already disappeared with the demolition of our guest houses. Here is the Shire's opportunity to say "no more" and to listen the people of Lorne.

We note that long-time FoL member, Lawrie Baker, has submitted to you a copy of an ongoing petition where some 363 people have already registered their opposition to the demolition of this building. It was the centre of our fishing industry for many years – and is now the only industrial building remaining on this stretch of coast – and some of Lorne's great characters are associated with it. Those memories and meanings are lost with demolition.

The buildings proposed

We do not object to the renovation of the Aquatic Club.

We object to the "beacon" concept and building and suggest that the concept needs to be further addressed.

We acknowledge that the plans have been scaled back slightly, but the building retains "beacon" features nonetheless, with what looks like a large mast or flagpole. In our view it was an error of judgement by GORCC to brief the architects to create an attention-grabbing new physical structure at Pt Grey when the rest of Lorne is expected by the Shire to comply with the requirement of being recessive in the landscape in both scale, design and materials.

We notice that GORCC's consultant's report (*Coastal Hazard Vulnerability Assessment*) uses the sea level rises adopted by the Victorian government - 0.82m by 2100. These predictions were set in 2014. Since then understanding of the factors involved has unfortunately led to worsening predictions. The IPCC report of 2019 on the cryosphere, will almost certainly

result in changes in predictions. It has in science, and this will eventually be diffused to government.

The Landscape

Parking options at Pt Grey should vary with the season. The choice of an urban landscape garden approach seems unwise and restrictive. A more European paved square might be better. During slow months, parking could be permitted on the open-space square, but in peak times and during Pier-to-Pub, parking would be restricted to the upper bank.

FoL recommends that, in order to preserve the current undeveloped 'look' of Pt Grey, the Shire consider less car parking spaces than might be allocated to like building(s) on an in-town site.

Large Buses

We agree that large buses would not be permitted. These vehicles should continue directly on their journey to the Twelve Apostles.

Protecting and communicating the site's legacy

The onus is on the Shire now to delay approval of its application until GORCC can address the heritage and cultural issues as this aspect of GORCC's commitment appears to be a sham. We note that there is still no commitment nor proposal to recalling and displaying the heritage of the area. On GORCC's website re Pt Grey it claims to be convening a "creative counsel (sic)" on Pt Grey – a group of people and agencies who will deliver the "creative, heritage and cultural components of the site". Our own organisation is listed as being on this so-called "counsel" yet no invitation has been extended to us and no response has been made to our inquiry to GORCC about this.

There should be authentic community consultation on the way heritage and history is incorporated into the site. We are of the view that the original crane and a couta boat should be returned for display at the site, thus conveying the history as a working pier. We also request that GORCC work with traditional custodians of the land to facilitate communication about the continued Indigenous use of the area as a gathering place, especially in the seasons of plentiful sea food.

Respect for process

We are aware that this amended plan comes at the end of a long and frustrating process for both GORCC and the community. We are aware that some feedback has been heard and incorporated by GORCC (e.g., the community's desire to retain two separate buildings). It is never easy to obtain a consensus view. We respect the goodwill and effort that has been expended. But as always, the answers one gets is dependent on what questions one is asked. The question of demolishing the co-op building was never put to the community. The original design concept ("a beacon building") was never put to the community.

Some good sense and perspective on the Shire's part now could restore community confidence and honour and respect a much-loved legacy. We urge the Shire not to go forward with the amended plan simply because that's the path we're now on.

CORRECTION (9 June 2020)

This submission contains the assertion that the option to keep the original Fisheries building was not given to the community. This was wrong, as evidenced in the testimony of GORCC at the 9 June 2020 Hearing of Objections and in the 2012 GORCC Pt Grey community

consultation documents sent to us subsequently by GORCC afterwards. We stand corrected. We apologise for the error.

Our error was also acknowledged to the Councillors of Surf Coast Shire by email immediately after the hearings closed on the evening of 9 June 2020. However, we also made the point in that email that even though the community spoke in favour of new buildings 8 years ago, having now seen the proposed plans, some 1527 people have now signed a petition in favour of keeping, renovating and repurposing the original Fisheries building. Note that this includes some 485 people with Lorne addresses (either permanent or holiday home).

Penny Hawe, President, Friends of Lorne